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AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

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FOSIF ROTA SPAIN IMMEDIATE

DIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

USINT BAGHDAD

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 5872

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI, PINTS, PINT, LE

SUBJECT: LEBANESE SITUATION JULY 5: ARAB LEAGUE EFFORTS TAKE ON NEW
LIFE; MILITARY SITUATION STAGNATES

REF: BEIRUT 5852

1. SUMMARY: AFTER UNINSPIRING START OF ARAB LEAGUE MEDIATION
EFFORT WITH UNSUCCESSFUL CEASEFIRE "AGREEMENT" (SITREP JULY 4),
BEIRUT SURPRISED BY MEETING JULY 4 AT SOFAR UNDER AL AUSPICES,
BRINGING TOGETHER MOST MAJOR PARTIES TO CONFLICT. SECOND
MEETING EXPECTED JULY 5. DE FACTO PARTITION NOW WELL ATO TED
AS KATAEB ADMINISTRATIVE APPARATUS IN EAST BEIRUT FUNCTIONS AS
LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN EVERYTHING BUT NAME. TELL ZAATAR REMAINS
TENSE, BUT CHRISTIANS IN CONTROL OF ALL BUT POCKETS OF
RESISTANCE. FIGHTING ELSEWHERE
INDECISIVE. ISRAELI MILITARY SUPPLY OF CHRISTIAN SIDE NOW
BEING MORE OPENLY DISCUSSED. END SUMMARY.

2. NEWSPAPERS HEADLINE JULY 4 SURPRISE MEETING AT SOFAR JOINING
SEC GEN MAHMOUD RIAD AT HEAD OF AL MEDIATION TEAM,
SYRIAN FOREIGN MINISTER ABDEL HALIM KHADDAM, AND REPRESENTATIVES
OF BOTH PALESTINIAN RESISTANCE AND RIGHTIST LEBANESE FRONT. AL

GROUP ORIGINALLY SCHEDULED RETURN CAIRO JULY 4 BUT INSTEAD CAME
DIRECTLY FROM DAMASCUS AFTER MEETING WITH LIBYAN PREMIER
JALLOD, WHO EVIDENTLY CONTINUES HIS SOMEWHAT ISOLATED MEDIATION
EFFORTS THERE. RADIO SILENCE ON MEETING GUARDED BY STATIONS OF
ALL PARTIES, BUT IT APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN ATTENDED ALSO BY YASIR
ARAFAT WHO HAD RETURNED TO LEBANON BY SEA THROUGH SIDON ON
JULY 3 AND HAS SINCE MET WITH HIGH-LEVEL PALESTINIANS AND KAMAL
JUNBLATT. KATAEB POLITBURO MEMBER KARIM PAKRADOUNI, IN SYRIA
EARLIER JULY FOR CONSULTATION WITH PRESIDENT ASSAD, MADE IT BACK
TO SOFAR IN TIME. MEETING SAID TO BE PRELIMINARY TO POLITICAL
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TALKS AMONG LEBANESE LEFT AND RIGHT, PALESTINIANS, AND SYRIANS.
SECOND MEETING SCHEDULED FOR JULY 5. CHRISTIANS REPORTEDLY
SAYING REAL POLITICAL DIALOGUE ONLY POSSIBLE IF CAIRO ACCORDS
ADHERED TO AND PALESTINIANS SAYING THERE CAN BE NO DIALOGUE
UNTIL ATTACK ON TELL ZAATAR STOPS. LEBANESE LEFT SHOWS SIGNS
OF DISSATISFACTION OVER ITS NON-REPRESENTATION AT
JULY 4 MEETING WHICH REPORTEDLY DISCUSSED TELL ZAATAR AS
MOST IMMEDIATE PROBLEM. ON SECONDARY LEVEL, AL DEPUTY

SEC GEN KHOLI AND PEACEKEEPING FORCE CHIEF OF STATE COL.
CHEDID MET PIERRE GEMAYEL WHO RENEWED HIS DEM JRTOGAT
PALESTINIANS RETURN TO THEIR OWN NATIONAL OBJECTIVE
AND BE RESETTLED IN OTHER ARAB COUNTRIES.

3. FROM LATE REPORT JULY 5 WE UNDERSTAND AL HOPES TO ORGANIZE
CEASEFIRE AT TELL ZAATAR TODAY, BUT THIS IS REPORTEDLY
JEOPARDIZED BY MID-MORNING JULY 5 REPORTS OF PALESTINIAN ATTACK
ON CHEKKA, COASTAL VILLAGE AT NORTHERN END OF CHRISTIAN-DOMINATED
TERRITORY SOUTH OF TRIPOLI.

4. CHRISTIANS IN WEST BEIRUT INCREASINGLY DISTURBED OVER
CONTINUED SIGNS OF DE FACTO PARTITION. RAYMOND EDDE ADDRESSEES
YET ANOTHER LIST OF RHETORICAL QUESTIONS, THIS TIME TO
MARONITE "KFOUR FRONT," SAYING CHRISTIANS DARE NOT ANSWER
ACCUSATIONS ON THEIR PARTITION PLANS. DAR AL-AMAL ORGANIZATION
SET UP BY KATAEB SEVERAL MONTHS AGO TO PROVIDE ADMINISTRATIVE
CONTROL OF CHRISTIAN HELD AREAS STILL NOT CALLED A GOVERNMENT,
BUT EAST BEIRUT SECURITY AND ADMINISTRATIVE APPARATUS FAR MORE
DEVELOPED THAN IN WEST BEIRUT. BRANCHES FOR HEALTH, EDUCATION,
TAXATION, ETC., OPERATING AND LEBANESE IN RIGHTIST-CONTROLLED
AREAS SPEAKING OPENLY OF "DECENTRALIZATION" AND
"REGIONALIZATION," IF NOT YET OF EXPLOSIVE TERM "PARTITION."

5. FR TUTOJS "CONSTITUTIONAL DOCUMENT" OF FEBRUARY 14 ONCE AGAIN
UNDER ATTACK, THIS TIME BY "ASSOCIATION OF THE ANCIENTS OF
MAKASSAD" WHICH CALLS DOCUMENT " AN AMALGAM OF CONTRADICTIONARY
IDEAS." GROUP SAYS DOCUMENT IS INAPPLICABLE AND FRANGIE
COMMITTED NEW ERROR WHEN HE MADE IT BASIS HIS RECENT MESSAGE
TO AL.

6. FIGHTING AT TELL ZAATAR IS VIRTUALLY OVER WITH FINAL REDOUBT
TAKEN AND ONLY POCKETS OF RESISTANCE REMAINING. WE UNDERSTAND
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THAT MAJORITY REMAINING DEFENDERS HAVE SURRENDERED. RED
CROSS, ON REQUEST OF BOTH SIDES,
HAS UNDERTAKEN EVACUATION OF WOUNDED AND WE UNDERSTAND
SOME 200 PALESTINIAN WOUNDED BROUGHT OUT OF TELL ZAATAR AND
DELIVERED TO RED CROSS ON JULY 3 AND 4. PALESTINIANS CLAIM AL
DEPUTY SEC GEN HASSAN KHOLI HAD ARRANGED WITH RED CROSS FOR
TRANSPORT OF PALESTINIAN PRISONERS TO MUSEUM SECTOR FROM WHERE
THEY CAN REACH SABRA QAMP, BUT RIGHTIST MUTE ON SUBJECT.
WESTERN EYEWITNESS WHO TOOK CONSIDERABLE RISK OF CROSSING
"GREEN LINE" FROM RIGHTIST SIDE SAYS IT DOUBTFUL RIGHTISTS HAVE
SUFFERED MORE THAN 100 CASUALTIES IN ENTIRE TELL ZAATAR BATTLE.
(YESTERDAY AL REPRESENTATIVE, SABRI AL-KHOULI, WAS SHOT AT WHILE
CROSSING HERE.) EYEWITNESS SAYS CAMP TOTALLY SURROUNDED FOR LAST
FEW DAYS AND CHRISTIANS DID NOT NEED MAKE FINAL ASSAULT AS CAMP
COMPLETELY CUT OFF AND CHRISTIANS DOMINATED CAMP FROM TALAT EL MIR.

KATAEB LEADERSHIP SAYING IT PLANS CLEAN OUT NABAA NEXT, AND MANY SHIITE INHABITANTS REPORTED LEAVING AREA. NABAA IS UNDER CONTROL OF LEFTIST AND PALESTINIAN ELEMENTS, AND IS LAST REMAINING NON-CHRISTIAN ENCLAVE IN EAST BEIRUT.

7. IN BEIRUT AREA, KATAEB SAYS INFILTRATION EFFORTS OF "PALESTINIANS AND THEIR MERCENARIES" HAVE BEEN REPULSED ALONG CENTER CITY CONFRONTATION LINE. ACHRAFIYYAH STILL UNDER BOMBARDMENTS FROM NABAA AND FIREFIGHTS CONTINUE ALONG BECHARA EL-KHOURY AXIS. VILLEN FIGHTING CONTINUES IN ALEY DISTRICT ON THE ROAD TO ARAY AND KAHALE. LEFTIST CLAIM TO HAVE TAKEN VILLAGE OF ARAYA IS APPARENTLY FALSE. VILLAGE OF BSOUSS AND KAHALE ALSO INVOLVED IN FIGHTING. CONTRARY TO PREVIOUS REPORTS, HUGE FIRE OF NIGHT JULY 3 AND 4 WAS NOT AT TELL ZAATAR BUT WAS BURNING OF WOODS AROUND ARAYA. VOICE OF PALESTININE ANNOUCNES ANOTHER LARGE FOREST FIRE NEAR JDAIDE FOLLOWING PALESTINIAN BOMBARDMENT OF SABTIE.

8. ELSEWHERE, LEFTIST SOURCES CLAIM SYRIAN ARMY ATTACKED JOINT PALESTINIAN/LEFTIST GROUPS JULY 4 IN BEKAA. LEFTISTS MAKE UNSUBSTANTIATED AND PROBABLY FALSE CLAIM THEY HAVE DESTROYED SYRIAN ARMY HEADQUARTERS AT RAYAK. SYRIAN BLOCKADES OF BAALBECK AND HERMEL CONTINUE. BOMBARDMENTS CONTINUE BUT THERE IS NO GROUND ACTION IN NORTH METN OR AT OUYOUN EL SIMANE. IN NORTH LEBANON, MUTUAL BOMBARDMENTS CONTINUE BETWEEN TRIPOI AND ZGHORTA AND SOME FIGHTING
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CONTINUES IN KOURA DISTRICT. DATE REORT OF BATTLE AT CHEKKA, OTED ABOVE, INDICATES NORTH MAY BECOME CENTER OF STRIFE IN COMING DAYS.

9. SAEB SALAM FOLLOWED UP JULY 3 STATEMENT BY FATAH NO. 2 SALAH KHALAF ON ISRAELI MILITARY SUPPORT TO RIGHTISTS. SALAM SAID NOT ONLY HAVE ISRAELIS SENT 40 TANKS TO JOUNIEH, BUT NATIONAL LIBERAL PARTY AND ITS ALLIES HAVE ON SVERAL OCCASIONS RECEIVED ARMS AND FUNDS FROM ISRAEL VIA CERTAIN LEBANOESE AMBASSADORS IN EUROPE. AMIN GEMAYEL ALSO REACTED TO KHALAF STATEMENT, SAYING IT IS "LIE" THAT HE ONCE TOLD KHALAF THAT WHEREAS HE HAD REFUSED ISRAELI MILITARY AID, CAMILLE CHAMOUN HAD ACCEPTED IT. FOREIGNER WHO VISITED RIGHTIST HELD AREAS SAYS CHRISTIAN FIGHTERS MAKING NO BONES ABOUT CARRYING ISRAELI-SUPPLIED WEAPONS THOUGH SOME WEAPONS HAVE SERIAL NUMBERS FILED OFF.
SEELYE UNQTE ROBINSON

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